



[CONTENTS, JUNE, 2024]

1. O-BIC RECRUITS 34 OVERSEAS COMPANIES TO OSAKA IN FY2023 - WELL UP ON FY2022

2. CHINA-JAPAN BUSINESS PROMOTION PLATFORM OF OCCI

3. GIF OSAKA UPDATES

4. ASEAN-JAPAN BUSINESS PROMOTION PLATFORM NEWS

5. OCCI SURVEY SHOWS CHALLENGES FACED BY SMES

6. 2025 WORLD EXPO UPDATES

7. BUNRAKU PERFORMANCE FOR BEGINNERS / DISCOVER BUNRAKU

8. COURTESY VISIT (24TH APRIL-31TH MAY)

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1. O-BIC RECRUITS 34 OVERSEAS COMPANIES TO OSAKA IN FY2023 - WELL UP ON FY2022

The Osaka Business and Investment Center (O-BIC) announced on May 30, 2024, that it had recruited some 34 overseas companies to Osaka in FY2023, a significant increase over the previous year in the run-up to the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

The largest number of investments came from China with 13, followed by the Republic of Korea with 11, and Taiwan, the USA, and the UAE

with two each. For more on O-BIC and how it can help your business invest in Osaka, check out the official

website at <https://o-bic.net/>

2. WHAT'S IN STORE THIS YEAR FOR THE CHINA-JAPAN BUSINESS PROMOTION PLATFORM?

The China-Japan Business Promotion Platform, which was launched in June 2023 as an expansion of the China

Business Support Office, is poised for a very active year. The platform team look forward to providing information to platform subscribers, providing advisory services regarding doing business in China, and organizing tours and other activities as a means of generating business opportunities.

Highlights of the year so far include a business delegation to Shenyang and Dalian on 22-26 April, 2024. Participants met with local movers and shakers, and explored business opportunities through visits to local companies. Meanwhile, on April 22, 2024, we hosted a seminar on China's economic outlook by Long Ke, senior fellow at the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, which attracted an audience of 110.

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3. GIF OSAKA UPDATES

A Helping Hand for Japanese and Overseas Startups Global Innovation Forum (GIF) Osaka is a platform aimed at driving open, cross-border innovation by helping Japanese startups gain overseas footholds and fostering partnerships between overseas startups and Japanese companies.

GIF Osaka Meet-ups: Matching Overseas Startups with Japanese Companies

May 17: GIF Osaka Meet-up: Thailand

May 22: GIF Osaka Meet-up: Australia

July 2: GIF Osaka Meet-up: Taiwan

July: GIF Osaka Meet-up: UK

October: GIF Osaka Meet-up: USA

November: GIF Osaka Meet-up: ASEAN

GIF Osaka Challenge: Helping Japanese Startups Expand Overseas

July: Exhibiting at SITE 2024 in Thailand

January 2025: Exhibiting at CES in the USA

Find out more at https://gif.osaka.cci.or.jp/common/pdf/gif2024_en.pdf

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4. ASEAN-JAPAN BUSINESS PROMOTION PLATFORM NEWS

The OCCI, in partnership with the Vietnamese Consulate-General in Osaka, held a business networking event on May 17, 2024, to coincide with a visit to Osaka by the Deputy Chairman of the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee. The event was attended by some 50 Vietnamese companies and more than 100 local attendees, and generated lively discussion aimed at collaboration between the two nations.

On May 20, 2024, we held a seminar jointly with the Thai Consulate-General in Osaka. The audience heard from several leading Thai lawyers about the local investment environment, Thailand's initiatives towards carbon neutrality, and the latest developments in ESG. Attendees had many questions for the speakers, which indicates that there is a keen interest in doing business in Thailand.

Find out more (in Japanese) about the ASEAN Business Promotion Platform at:

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/abp/>

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5. OCCI SURVEY SHOWS CHALLENGES FACED BY SMES

Dealing with labor shortages is the biggest challenge faced by SMEs according to a survey of SMEs by the OCCI. Some 58.3% of respondents chose investment in manpower saving, securing personnel, preventing turnover, etc. (i.e., labor shortages) as the biggest headache.

Elsewhere, the most common response (32.8%) to a question about whether companies were able to pass on the rising labor costs to customers was a resounding no, indicating high demand for a system that would enable businesses to reflect cost increases in their prices.

Other concerns were also raised: regarding barriers to investment in labor-saving technologies, 44.0% of respondents pointed to a lack of clarity surrounding cost-effectiveness, while 45.6% said that language problems in day-to-day communication were the biggest challenge when working with foreign personnel.

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6. 2025 WORLD EXPO UPDATES

6.1. The “All Osaka’s a Stage” Co-creation Platform to Harness the 2025 World Expo Launched on April 25, 2024, the “All Osaka’s a Stage” Co-creation Platform to Harness the 2025 World Expo is an online platform to help make the 2025 World Expo in Osaka a great success by showcasing areas outside the expo venue as a stage in themselves. As we see it, all Osaka is an expo?its towns, its people, its activities and events. A huge variety of fun stuff is being planned outside of the expo venue, so be sure to check out the site so you don’t miss out.

Meanwhile, an All Osaka’s a Stage symposium was held on May 13, 2024. Opening remarks by OCCI chairperson Shingo Torii were followed by a panel discussion with Carolyn Davidson, the British Consul-

General in Osaka, UK Commissioner General for the 2025 World Expo, and Dean of the Kansai Consular Corps.

Check out the official website of the “All Osaka’s a Stage” Co-creation Platform to Harness the 2025 World Expo at machigotoexpo.jp/en-about/

6.2. Tech Tours Kansai

Tech Tours Kansai are a fascinating and enjoyable way to see and experience Osaka’s famous industrial and sightseeing delights. As we count down to the 2025 World Expo, Tech Tours Kansai not only provide a sneak peek inside the expo venue, but also a variety of other planned-to-order tours tailored to your needs by the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau in partnership with specialist travel agencies. Destinations include Osaka’s famous traditional industries, state-of-the-art tech, and manufacturing facilities.

Check out the official Tech Tours Kansai website at

www.tech-tours-kansai.osaka-info.jp/en/

And finally, a piece of Osaka trivia. Did you know that the waste incineration plant and wastewater sludge center on Maishima island was designed by legendary Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser? You know those psychedelic buildings visible from the expressway as you head south toward Kansai Airport? That’s not an amusement park - it’s where they process trash and wastewater! For such a functional facility it’s an outrageously funky looking place. Go check it out - it’s genuinely fascinating and they do tours, too.

6.3. OCCI's Website Showcasing 2025 World Expo Pavilions

The OCCI has launched a website showcasing the various pavilions of the 2025 World Expo in Osaka as part of its efforts to generate momentum for the big event. The different countries' and regions' pavilions are surely the star attraction of any World Expo, and the excitement for the 2025 edition is building steadily with each announcement of pavilion concepts and each groundbreaking ceremonies. The OCCI's expo website meets a strong desire among participating countries to promote their pavilions in Japan, providing an easy to read list of all pavilions.

6.4. Tickets for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

- Admission tickets will be available from 30th Nov. 2023, exactly 500 days before the opening of the EXPO 2025.

- Firstly, you need to register yourself to Expo2025 website and get your Expo ID.

You can buy the ticket, reserve your entry date, and enjoy various services with EXPO ID

- Admission tickets will be e-tickets. You can purchase them with a smartphone or PC.
- In addition to the ticket, you need to reserve the entry date in advance. The detail information of entry reserve will be announced later.

【Click here to purchase admission tickets】

<https://www.expo2025.or.jp/en/tickets-index/>

Check out the OCCI's 2025 World Expo website at

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/expo2025/pavilion>

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7. BUNRAKU PERFORMANCE FOR BEGINNERS / DISCOVER BUNRAKU FOR BEGINNERS

We would like to introduce the event "Discover BUNRAKU for Beginners" as below.

Discover BUNRAKU —BUNRAKU for Beginners—

Performance Date: Sunday, June 16 2024

Performance Time: 14:30 - 16:45 -The ABC of BUNRAKU —Introduction to BUNRAKU—

(Explanation in ENGLISH)

[Navigator] Diego Pellecchia (Associate Professor, Department of Kyoto Studies, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Kyoto Sangyo University)

-Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami (Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy)

The New Student

The Village School

FREE services :

- English audio guide
- English subtitles displayed on screen
- FREE Synopsis in English / Chinese / Korean / Spanish / French

<Website>

<https://www.ntj.jac.go.jp/schedule/bunraku/2024/202406.html&lan=e>

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8.<COURTESY VISIT (24TH APRIL-31TH MAY)>

(Consul General of Italy in Osaka)24th April

-H. E. Mr. Marco Prencipe

(Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda)13th May

- H. E. Ms. Tophace Kaahwa

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[O-BIC as one-stop service center for creating a foothold in Osaka]

<http://o-bic.net/>

[Information about scheduled events (in Japanese only)]

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/index.php>

[linkedin]

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/osaka-o-bic-2025/recent-activity/all/>



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